

# Earth First! Action Update

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30p

"All good things are wild and free." - Henry Thoreau.

## MILFORD HAVEN

The publicised action to attempt to close down Milford Haven on Saturday 14th February did not happen. This was mainly due to the massive police presence around Milford Haven, which included around 300 police, mainly in riot gear, who were to some extent successful in keeping down the trouble makers, including burning down a mobile car, resulting in damage around the port and putting in roadblocks around the area. As well as this, local green groups and some individuals in the area were paid visits by police, both uniformed and in riot attempt to disguise themselves as protesters, in order to find out more information on the plans for the action.

A whole hospital ward was also closed and put on standby for the day and Mr. Rlesley, the Port's main man, had police escorts to and from work, as well as more new fencing all around his home with fifty security men surrounding it.

Noting all this, and realising that not much more disruption could be caused, it was agreed that a tactical change of plan was necessary if any action was to happen. An emergency meeting was called where it was decided that people would strike in the town of Jermal Bay and the Redoubt the Valley's 33 action, originally planned for the Monday, would simply be moved forward to cause the police. Despite the geographical and technical differences, both industries are engaged in destroying the ecology of South Wales in pursuit of profit with no regard for the consequences to the local people or environment.

It was also decided that the larger group would not be held off the change of plans until the following morning and then given the option as to whether they still wanted to be part of the changed plan, as by then it would be too late for the obviously dodgy protesters that had appeared on the newly signed fence (from nowhere) to alert the police. This is obviously not an ideal way to carry out an action but faced with a number of problems, this seemed to be the most realistic way to attempt an effective action from the original plan.

As it turned out, the operation was, at first, very successful in closing down for the day in workers were caught completely unaware and every working machine was stopped.

It was at least half an hour before a solitary policeman showed up and another half an hour before a few of his companions joined him, all others having been called to Milford Haven. Workers were mostly quiet apart from the odd one or two that were taking to use physical force to spot people from machines, indeed anyone with a camera was particularly in danger with one man from the safety of the main group being attacked and having his camera smashed to pieces. Anyone who had been on the previous occupation of this site though, considered this to be nothing at

all compared to the violence against protesters then. Apparently the workers are now under orders to stay calm and not to use violence. It is a shame that they did not all follow these instructions.



Three signs at the power station's entrance during the action.

The drivers of one digger actually acted it as people started towards him and as one person climbed onto his cab he spun around in an attempt to knock him off. The guy banged on the window asking him to stop which caused the emergency window to pop out as it is supposed to. This was not an critical damage by the workers and they signed blood. They settled for the arrest of this one guy and as headlights a half dozen was made allowing him to get off with the police with what seemed of a deal, leaving people with a bad taste in their mouths. What should have occurred was that he be surrounded by at least his ally group and be forced off sight.

Although there were six arrests for alleged criminal damage, many materials stores had appeared as the local press over the weeks preceding the action, with complete articles published about both Earth First! and the planned action at Milford Haven. One of those that was the whole action was being put together by people outside of Wales. This was simply not true as local people, both Earth First!ers and others, being centrally involved in the action planning.

In July on the same Saturday a local Earth First!er addressed the crowd at the Friends of the Earth Rally and put the story straight about Earth First! and their support for local concerns around the San Francisco disaster. Since the events on the February 14th there have been two more of spills off the Welsh coast. We'll be back! South the Old Industry!

## GORLEBEN!

The first week of March saw the biggest civil disobedience of police in protestant Germany to force through a shipment of nuclear waste containers to the storage depot at Gorleben near Hamburg.

Over 30,000 Police were mobilised for the operation which began when 8 storage Trucks (Covers) were moved from their base at Nocker Westfalen in Southern Germany the previous Friday. Protests happened during the weekend, with 10,000 people marching in Lüneburg, and transport links being sabotaged. The transports were moved by train as far as Dammberg, where they were confronted by nearly 1000 people the night they arrived. Trucks were cut through and people confronted themselves in the night, delaying the arrival by over 8 hours.

For the last 15 kilometres to Gorleben by road, the Castors were loaded onto specially reinforced lorries. They were confronted by massive resistance. There were only 2 possible routes, and one of these was made impassable by 10 tractors belonging to local farmers blocking the road, with some digging under the road as well. The other route was hard with Police, especially the whole were and a new law was passed, making it illegal to go within 50 metres of the road.

At midnight on Monday the Police began moving over 4000 people who were sitting in front of the gates by the Castors, initially packing them up then leaving them with water cannons, and finally dousing them with tear gas. Some people dangled from trees above the Castors. It took over 8 hours to remove them all. When the Castors were finally ready to move, thousands of people who had been staying in different camps near the route were mobilised, employing various tactics. They were confronted by 1000 Antennae (German anti-aircraft type) in a field outside the village of Quacken, who started burning barricades. A full scale battle ensued, with the German state employing helicopters, water cannons, and snipers to force the transports through.

Later a group of 50 protesters managed to get to the Castors, with one man locking on to the trucks. At one point riot Police who had tried to slash the tyres of trucks blocking the road, were chased away by a crowd of over 100 people, and then had to be rescued by helicopters! Because the route was so heavily policed the Castors were hardly delayed once they had begun, but the got through at an estimated cost of £5m, and with accusations by opposition MPs of gross mismanagement. It is unlikely that there will be any more transports for 2 years, and with over 90% of Germans opposed to nuclear power, and thousands prepared to take direct action, it is questionable that the authorities will ever be able to repeat such an operation.

This issue of the Earth First! Action Update is the last that will be produced here in London. It has now moved to Manchester and will be produced there for the next year. The new contact is:

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# 'Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television'

by Jerry Mander.

(Taken from the book: "Quavering Technology: tool, toy or tyrant?" edited by John Zerzan and Alice Citrines. Published by New Society Publishers, Philadelphia in co-operation with Freedom Press, London 1991.)

Most Americans, whether on the political left, center or right, will argue that technology is neutral, that any technology is merely a benign instrument, a tool, and depending upon the hands into which it falls, it may be used one way or another. There is nothing that prevents a technology from being used well or badly: nothing intrinsic to the technology itself or the circumstances of its emergence which can predetermine its use, its control or its effects upon individual human lives or the social and political forms around us.

The argument goes that television is merely a window or a conduit through which any perception, any argument or reality may pass. It therefore has the potential to be enlightening to people who watch it and is potentially useful to democratic processes. It will be the central point of this book that these assumptions about television, as about other technologies, are totally wrong.

If you once accept the principle of an army – a collection of military technologies and people to run them – all gathered together for the purpose of fighting, overpowering, killing and winning, then it is obvious that the supervisors of armies will be the sort of people who desire to fight, overpower, kill and win, and who are also good at these assignments: generals. The fact of generals, then, is predictable by the creation of armies. The kinds of generals are also predictable: Humanistic, loving, pacifistic generals, though they may exist from time to time, are extremely rare animals. It is useless to advocate that we have more of them.

If you accept the existence of automobiles, you also accept the existence of roads laid upon the landscape, oil to run the cars, and huge institutions to find the oil, pump it and distribute it. In addition you accept a speed-up style of life and the movement of humans through the urban at speeds that make it impossible to pay attention to whatever is growing there. Humans who use cars sit in fixed positions for long hours following a narrow strip of grey pavement, with eyes fixed forward, engaged in the task of driving. As long as they are driving, they are living within what we might call "tradition". Slowly they evolve into car-people. Mel Gibson told us that cars "extended the human foot, but he put it in the wrong way. It replaced human feet."

If you accept nuclear power plants, you also accept a techno-scientific-industrial-military elite. Without these people in charge, you could not have nuclear power. You and I getting together with a few friends could not make use of nuclear power. We could not build such a plant, nor could we make personal use of its output, nor handle or store the radioactive waste products which remain dangerous to life for thousands of years. The wastes, in sum, determine that future societies will have to maintain a technological capacity to deal with the problem, and the military capability to protect the wastes. So the existence of the technology determines many aspects of the society.

If you accept mass production, you accept that a small number of people will supervise the daily existence of a much larger number of people. You accept that human beings will spend long hours, every day, engaged in repetitive work, while suppressing any desire for experience or activity beyond this work. The workers' behaviour becomes subject to the machine. With mass production, you also accept that huge numbers of identical items will need to be efficiently distributed to huge numbers of people and that institutions such as advertising will arise to do this. One technological process cannot exist without the other, causing symbiotic relationships among technologies themselves.

If you accept the existence of advertising, you accept a system designed to persuade and to dominate minds by interfering in people's thinking patterns. You also accept that the system will be used by the sorts of people who like to influence people and are good at it. No person who did not wish to dominate others would choose to use advertising, or choosing it, succeed in it. So the basic nature of advertising and all technologies created to serve it will be consistent with this purpose: will encourage this behaviour in society, and will tend to push social evolution in this direction.

In all of these instances, the basic form of the institution and the technology determines its interaction with the world, the way it will be used, the kind of people who use it, and to what ends. And so it is with television. Far from being "neutral," television itself predetermines who shall use it, how they will use it: what effects it will have on individual lives, and, if it continues to be widely used, what sorts of political forms will inevitably emerge.

It was only after a long while and many half-steps of change in viewpoint that I finally faced the fact that television is not reformable, that it must be gotten rid of totally if our society is to return to something like sane and democratic functioning. So, to repeat that case, especially considering that it involves a technology accepted as readily and eagerly as electric light itself, it is not something that ought to be done rapidly or lightly. Nor can such a case be confined to the technology itself, as if it existed aside from a context.

The first argument is theoretical and environmental. It attempts to set the framework by which we can understand television's place in modern society. Yet, this argument is not about television itself. In fact, television will be mentioned only occasionally. It is about a process, already long underway, which has successfully redirected and confined human experience and therefore knowledge and perceived reality. We have all been moved into such a narrow and distorted channel of experience that a dangerous instrument like television can come along and seem useful, interesting, sane, and worthwhile at the same time: it further boxes people into a physical and mental condition appropriate for the emergence of a scientific control.

The second argument concerns the emergence of the controllers. That television would be used and expanded by the present powers – that is was inevitable and should have been predictable at the outset. The technology permits of no other controllers.

The third argument concerns the effects of television upon individual human bodies and minds, effects which fit the purposes of the people who control the medium.

The fourth argument demonstrates that television has no democratic potential. The technology itself places absolute limits on what may pass through it. The medium, in effect, chooses its own content from a very narrow field of possibilities. The effect is to drastically confine all human understanding within a rigid channel. What binds the four arguments together is that they deal with aspects of television that are not reformable.

What is revealed in the end is that there is ideology in the technology itself. To speak of television as "neutral" and therefore subject to change is as absurd as speaking of the reform of a technology such as guns.

This text is one of many that is being produced by Dead Tree Earth First! They are available as cheap self produced pamphlets as well as on the Internet. For more details send an SAE to: Dead Tree Earth First! c/o SDEF! Prior House, Tibury Place,

Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 3GY.





'benefits' are only seen on the balance sheets of multinational corporations

Due to silly Royal Park bye-laws police went over the top yet again, threatening anyone holding banners or handing out leaflets with arrest even though some delegates were specifically asking for them.

The Big Green gathering will be a gathering dating specifically with games (from 19-20 April). Go along, if you are working in the Greenies campaign and/or actors or would like to be followed by Global Days of Action, an international week of action against genetically engineered food and crops.

For more details contact: 01865 781381 or Women's Environmental Network on 0171 243 3327. To get on an E-mail list for Greenies information send requests to: [envinfo@ecp.org](mailto:envinfo@ecp.org)

## PURE GENIUS

The Windsworth Eco-village site that was erected and abandoned in October last year is about to be re-occupied. It had been here in many in the six months since The Lord is Ours had handed a cover after an initial week long occupation the previous May.

On May 5th 1997 you can start the re-occupation of the site. **PURE GENIUS** is re-erecting the tent at a main rally at South Park, Tufnell, M8 at 12 noon. Being along powerful voices, poets and songwriters, eg. popstar, look, ask, wild roses, sunflowers, vesicles and poppies. **Pure Genius** are also calling for an international boycott of all Guinness and United Distillers' products as part of a wider campaign. Details of actions and anti-Guinness propaganda, can be found on the TLOO website at <http://www.onsworld.org> (Members find Call 0171 249 3765 or email [steve@tlooo.co.uk](mailto:steve@tlooo.co.uk)). Borrow size stickers with the words 'Guinness Kills Trees' and 'Boycott of Destruction' in original Guinness style format are also available.

Please send a cheque or postal order payable to The Lord is Ours for £10 per TLOO (incl. p&p) to Box F: 311 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1BQ.

## BOUGAINVILLE NEWS

Bougainville is an island that lies 1200 kms off the Solomon Islands. Originally colonised by the Dutch, then the Germans, it came under Australian rule after World War 2. Despite close cultural and geographical links to the Solomon Islands it was governed as part of Papua New Guinea (PNG) and when PNG was given independence in 1975 Bougainville was included as part of PNG territory.

In 1988 CRA, an Australian subsidiary of British mining company Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ), finally established a copper mine on Bougainville. Until then the native people of

Bougainville resented this mine. Finally in 1988, after years of failed protest, people on the island closed down one of the largest copper mines in the world. Following the closing of the mine the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) was established to defend the land and environment from further damage. This expanded into a struggle for independence from Papua New Guinea (PNG) and for 8 years the BRA, despite being heavily outgunned and out numbered, have been winning and pushing PNG military forces off the island.

PNG's solution came to light in February when news that mercenaries from various countries, predominantly South Africa, had been sent into Bougainville to assist the PNG military. The British company Sandline International, based in the Kings Road, London, is one of the companies also involved in sending the mercenaries out there. These mercenaries are highly experienced and probably some of the best soldiers in the world. If they go ahead and engage the BRA it is most likely that they will win.

To highlight the situation a demonstration was held outside the Papua New Guinea High Commission in London, which coincided with one in Australia on Wednesday 30th March. A number of people climbed the statue opposite and as well as hanging a banner saying 'MURDERERS' and 'HITLER HITLER IN OUT OF BOLLAGARDHILL', one activist dangled himself from the scaffold around the statue with a chest harness, as reminding somebody who had been hung by the neck. This attracted considerable attention from passers by and news were shocked when informed as to what is going on out in Bougainville.

For more information about Bougainville contact: Bougainville Freedom Movement (UK), c/o SDPF. To receive the latest news on the situation in Bougainville, subscribe to the newsletter *Guinea*. A year long subscription costs AU\$220. Make cheques payable to the Bougainville Freedom Movement, PO Box 134, Ingleburn, 2541 Australia. There also have a web page at <http://www.bougainville.org> and E-mail contact at [web@bougainville.org](mailto:web@bougainville.org) or: Oh Yeah! Victory to the BRA!

## RUNWAY 2

A little bit more at the paradise that is commonly known as countryside in our supposedly pleasant land is due for the chop and digger. The planned second runway at Manchester will destroy over 1000 acres of greenish land which will destroy 45 ponds. 15km of hedgerows and 75 hectares of mature woodland. As well as the River Bolton, a Site of Biological Importance (SBI) will be culverted and forest to flow through a concrete tunnel.

Visitors have been impressed with the growth of the campaign and the camps, of which there are

now five. On the way there are tree houses constantly appearing and tunnelling and defence building is continuing day and night. Only a small percentage of the threatened land has actually been covered by camps so far in there is a need for people to come up and set up new ones. Papers have been served on the camps with a court date set for 27th March. So evictions are now likely until April at the earliest, with a judicial review due to start soon. There is loads of time needs both on the ground, in the trees and in the office. The small lot of tape, ropes, polypipe and tar is needed.

There is going to be a Runway Work and Rally sometime in April so if you haven't visited this beautiful site by then that is an ideal opportunity to join the people of Manchester in saying NO to Runway 2.

For more information contact Cockburn against Runway 2 on 0161 834 3215. They also have a web site at <http://www.greenies.co.uk> (Runform0699).

## JUDI BARI DIES

On 2nd March Judi Bari, a prominent Earth First! organizer in the US, died peacefully of cancer. She came to widespread attention in the summer of 1996 when the car that her and another EFler, Darryl Cherry, were in was blown up by a bomb which left her crippled. They had been in the middle of organising Redwood Summer, a mass of actions surrounding the issue of logging at the old growth Redwoods in the Headwaters forest Northern California.

Initially the press were accused of covering the bomb in a target and accidentally blowing themselves up although in reality a lawsuit against the FBI, accusing it of attempting to frame her in a terrorist in order to discredit her and the radical ecology movement in the public's mind, is still going through the courts. The suit will go forward Cherry v. Ford. When he spoke with Bari recently, she told him, "After Richard Field is tried. Take this case to trial. Don't let them off the hook. And as Darryl said: "That's what we're going to do".

Richard Field was the FBI Special Agent in charge of the San Francisco office at the time of the bombing. He was central in the FBI infamous Counter Intelligence Programme (COINTELPRO) that was central in trying to discredit and destroy the American Indian Movement (AIM) and Black Panthers. He resigned from the FBI shortly after Judi, through the lawsuit, forced the disclosure of police photos of Judi's headshot on clearly showing that she hadn't been hidden directly under her desk's seat, rather than on the back seat floorboard, as police and the FBI had claimed to the press.

For more details contact: Earth First! Journal, P.O.B. 1415, Eugene, Oregon, USA. Telephone: 08 (541) 741 9141 or E-mail: [earthfirst@jag.net](mailto:earthfirst@jag.net)

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